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NOTICES

OF THE

HISTORIES OF BOSTON,

BY SIGMA.

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NOTICES
OF THE
HISTORIES OF BOSTON.

SOME NOTICE OF THE HISTORIES OF BOSTON.
No. I. It is not unpleasant, occasionally, to reverse the engine, and go back upon time's rail way to the days of small things. There are worthy men of wealth among us, who are not tintured with a false and foolish pride, and who would give sixpence, for a sight of the old wheelbarrow they have trundled, or the roadster they have curried, at eight dollars a month, and a sprinkling of old clothes, some fifty years ago!

It is no less pleasant, now that we have grown up to be a "smart place," and find ourselves complimented, as the Athens of America, to look over our shoulder, at the past. How completely our whole history could once have been thrust into a filbert shell!

It is a curious fact, that, many years before our town received its present name, after the former residence of Parson Cotton, the name of Boston was bestowed, by a sort of royal authority, upon a spot, some sixty miles north, in the neighborhood of Agamenticus, in Maine; as the reader will perceive, by looking at John Smith's map of 1614, prefixed to M. H. C., vol. 23. Smith says

"At my humble sute our most gracious King Charles, then Prince of Wales, was pleased to confirme it (New England) by that title, and did change the barbarous names of their principall harbours and habitations, for such English, that posterity may say King Charles was their Godfather; and in my opinion it should seeme an unmannerly presumption in any that doth alter them, without his leave."

Poor Charles! they had the "unmannerly presumption," not only to change his names, but to take his majesty's head off. The river Charles still retains its name of baptism. The *Chevyot*, of his naming, are our Blue Hills; and Agamenticus has triumphed over the "Snadown."

The earlier account of this metropolis, then Shawmut, is very brief, and without preface or appendix—*Indian corn does well; the musketoos are very troublesome; and, being a peninsula, but little fencing is required, to keep out the wolves.*

Wood commenced the publication of his *New England's Prospect*, in Loudon, in 1634. It is to be regretted, that he did not go more extensively into the zoological history of the country. Writing of lions, he says:

"I will not say, that I ever saw any myself, but some affirm, that they have seen a lion at Cape Anne, which is not above ten leagues from Boston. Some likewise, being lost in the woods, have heard such terrible roarings, as have made them much aghast; which must have been either devils or lions, there being no other creatures, which use to roar, saving bears, which have not such a terrible kind of roaring."

After this evidence of his relish for natural history, one regrets, that good old William Wood cannot be with us, at the present day, and see the elephant.

Thomas Lechford published his *Plaine Dealing*, in London, in 1642. He says:

"They are indifferently well able to subsist for victual. * * * * There are Deares, Wolves, and Foxes, and many other wild beasts, as the Moose, a kind of Deare, as big as some Oxen, and Lyons as I have heard."

Evidences of progress are scattered over the pages of many of the earlier writers. Edward Johnson published his *Wonder Working Providence* in 1654. Captain Johnson's style is somewhat ambitious, while describing the metropolis:

"Invironed it is with brinish flood, saving one small Isthmos, which gives free access to the neighboring towns by land, on the south side, on the northeast, and northwest. Two constant fairs are kept, for daily trafique thereunto. The form of this town is like a *heart*, naturally situ-

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ated for fortifications, having two hills on the frontier part thereof next the sea, the one well fortified on the superficies thereof, with store of great artillery, well mounted; the other hath a very strong battery, built of whole timber, and filled with earth. At the descent of the hill, in the extreme point thereof, betwixt these two strong arms, lies a cove or bay, on which the chief part of this town is built, overtopped with a third hill; all these, like overtopping towers, keep a constant watch, to see the approach of foreign dangers, being furnished with a beacon and loud babbling guns, to give notice, by their redoubled echo, to the neighboring towns. The chief edifice of this city-like town is *crowded* on the sea-banks, and wharfed out with great labor and cost; the buildings beautiful and large, some fairly set forth with brick tile, stone, and slate, and orderly placed with semely streets, whose continual enlargement presageth some sumptuous city. But now behold the admirable acts of Christ, at this his people's landing; the hideous thickets in this place were such, that wolves and beares nurst up their young from the eyes of all beholders, in those very places where the streets are full of girls and boys, sporting up and down with perpetual concourses of people. Good store of shipping is here yearly built, and some very fair ones. This town is the very mart of the land; Dutch, French and Portugalls come here to trafique."

Sixty-three years after, we had made great progress. In 1717, Herman Moll published his *Atlas Geographus*, in London. He says:

"Boston is reckoned the biggest in America, except some, which belong to the Spaniards. There are abundance of fine buildings, both public and private, as the Court house, the Market place, Sir Wm. Phipps's house, &c. They have four companies of militia, and three parish churches, besides a French church and two meeting houses, one for Church of England men, and another for Anabaptists. The inhabitants are reckoned at about 12,000. There's a market every Tuesday; and two fairs in May and October, which last three days each."

In 1794, Thomas Pemberton prepared what he called a *Topographical and Historical Description of Boston*. This description, or history, occupies sixty-four pages of the third volume of the *Massachusetts Historical Society's* collections. Mr. Pemberton was a Bostonian, by birth; a merchant, by profession; and a student, and a bach-

elor, by choice; and, therefore, being free from domestic care, more able, according to Lord Bacon, to serve the public. He was an honored member of the society, and contributed largely to its collections. He was very industrious, and his days were many. He bequeathed to the society some fifteen volumes of historical and biographical manuscripts, and died July 5, 1807, at the age of 79.

This little compendium is just what it pretends to be, a description, topographical and historical, of *Boston*, and of nothing else. It comes, at once, to the matter in hand; and, in a remarkably close and simple style, conveys a considerable amount of useful information, for the small space, which it occupies. The reader, all the while, realizes, that he is *in Boston*, or among the neighboring islands or suburbs; for the writer rigidly confines himself to the subject before him. In their order—consisely—and without stopping by the way, to pick up tales or traditions, he sets forth the latitude and longitude—the settlement—the extent and boundaries—the fortification—the common, mall, and hills—the bridge, mill pond, causeway, mills, streets, wharves, public buildings, &c.—the churches and their pastors, schools, wards, civil and military, fires, public societies, banks, manufactures, trade and navigation, Franklin's donation, climate, prevailing distempers, police, islands, and various other matters, no one of which could be justifiably omitted from a description of the town. I am not aware, that the correctness of this account has ever been challenged, in any very important particular. So far as it extends, it is a very valuable record, unquestionably; and, with a few trifling exceptions, reliable authority, as a work of reference. It has not the slightest pretensions to awaken any very lively interest, in the reader's mind; and, as a work of entertainment, it has a very much fainter resemblance to the *Arabian Nights*, than to the earliest *Boston Directory* of 1780, and which contained some fourteen hundred names. Let us stop here, for the present. SIGMA.

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE HISTORIES OF BOSTON. No. II. In 1817, Mr. Charles Shaw published a duodecimo volume of 311 pages, under the same title, adopted by Pemberton—"A Topographical and Historical Description of Boston"—with some account of its environs. Mr. Shaw was a scholar, and a member of the *American Antiquarian Society*. He sets forth his ob-

ject in an unpretending preface, commencing as follows:

"The reader is here presented with a collection of facts, relating to the history of Boston. Most of them are familiar to those, who have had curiosity to peruse our early writers, and patience to look over the musty records of the town. To such this book will be useful merely as an Index. It was compiled chiefly for that class of readers,

whose active duties give them little time for researches of this kind, and who yet feel a lively interest in everything connected with the characters of their ancestors, and the history of their birth place."

Just forty years ago, this volume was offered to the public, and accounted an interesting and useful work. In several instances, as in his accounts of the islands, the churches, &c., Mr. Shaw, avowedly, and almost literally, adopts the words of Pemberton. But his little volume is altogether more readable and interesting. There is a pleasure, not easily definable, and whose standard of value is not dollars and cents, arising from a knowledge of old localities, and who were the *loca tenentes* of those particular square feet, over which our modern edifices stand.

"A Mr. Marshall," says Shaw, "remembers when smelts were caught, at the head of the creek, near the meeting-house in Federal street."

This is the very spot, where Moorhead, and Annan, Belknap, and Popkin, Channing, and Gannett, have since been fishers of men, with something better, than ordinary fishermen's luck.

"Another aged inhabitant," says Shaw, "states, that he has seen a canoe sail, at different times, over the spot, which now forms the corner of Congress and Water street; and thinks he has seen the water three feet deep, in Federal street. He remembers having heard Dr. Chauncy say, that he had taken smelts in the place, now improved, as a garden, belonging to the estate of Judge Paine, in Milk street."

Judge Robert Treat Paine's estate was at the upper corner of Milk and Federal streets. The house fronted on Milk street, with a large garden, on front and flank.

Mr. Shaw's volume is well stored, for its size, with such interesting and amusing reminiscences. It was printed and published by Oliver Spear, with a fair type, but on wretched paper. It contains a few engravings, which are sufficiently authentic—the triangular warehouse, near the town dock, with its three towers, erected about 157 years ago, which has given rise to almost as much speculation, as the old mill at Newport;—Faneuil Hall;—the old State House—how few people are aware, that the present is the third, erected on the same spot: the first having been burnt in 1711, and the second erected in 1712, and burnt Dec. 9, 1747;—Christ Church, in Salem street;—and, though last, not without interesting associations, for some of us old fellows, the Julien House, with its antique gables, at the northwest corner of Milk and Congress streets, which was the dwelling-house of Mr. Calef in 1700. Often have I dined, during my bachelor days, more than five and forty years ago, in that little room, under the portico gable. There is a resurrection of Maurice Brunswick and old Sal-

ly, before me, as I write! Maurice, with his bald head and extraordinary forehead, bore no slight resemblance to John Quincy Adams. He was the engineer, the factotum of the establishment. What stewed eels and ragouts! But the mystery "that hung over Willemburg's walls" was not more perplexing, than that, which enveloped some portion of the *cuisinerie*, as practised at this celebrated *restaurant*.

It was thought very strange, that, however out of season, yet, as a particular favor, rabbits and squirrels were to be had, at this establishment, all the year round. Maurice was occasionally teased a little, for a solution of this mystery. On common occasions, his gravity was proof, against the efforts of those, who put any such questions, for conscience sake, or otherwise. But there was a species of fun, which lay deeply bedded, in the subsoil of the fellow's heart, and which required nothing but *heat* and *moisture*, to bring it forth. When a little cozy, and in the presence of those, who he knew would work him no injury, Maurice, like some men of heavier metal, was liable to an *epanchement de cœur*: and one day, when pressed, rather importunately, upon this vexed question, about rabbits and squirrels, he exclaimed, between irritation and merriment—"Vat for you care—plenty of clove, sage, peppaire, salt, all dat, plenty of de rich mushroom sauce—sarve him up vary hot—dem, if you know vat ish de cat, vat ish de rabbitt—vat ish de rat, vat ish de squirl!"

This is a digression, certainly—and the reader is at liberty to reject it, as surplussage.

Mr. Shaw's book never, I believe, proceeded to a second edition; and few copies of it are to be found. Five years after the appearance of this work, Dr. Caleb H. Snow published his History of Boston, with some account of its environs, in one volume, a small octavo of some 400 pages. A second edition, but without any important additions, appeared in 1828; and, not long before his decease, he contemplated a third, with additions and corrections. The plan, which Dr. Snow proposes for the composition of this history of Boston, is set forth, in the preface. After stating that "the reader may expect to find in it some notice of the persecutions, which drove the first settlers of New England from their native country," &c., he says:

"In my own mind, our history divides itself into six principal epochs: the first terminating with the deaths of Winthrop and Cotton; the second with the loss of the old charter, and the reception of the new, in 1692; the third at the arrival of Gov. Bernard, in 1760; the fourth with the war of the Revolution, in 1783; the fifth with the adoption of the city charter; and the events that have occurred since that period, constituting the sixth, and last."

It must be apparent, that, according to a writer's propensity and powers, for dilatation or compression, these materials may be condensed or expanded indefinitely. No ordinary skill and painstaking were required, to treat satisfactorily of these six epochs, in the compass of a small octavo volume, of some 400 pages, according a fair relative proportion of the whole to each particular epoch. It is, therefore, in no way surprising, that some portions of the task are slighted, while others, trifling in their character, are treated with a disproportionate minuteness and prolixity. The second edition of this work contains sixty-six chapters, to every one of which the author has prefixed a few lines of poetry, or some selected passage, whose applicability is not always readily apprehended, by the reader. To the body of the work are subjoined an appendix and addenda. A work of this kind, comprehending a great number and variety of facts and incidents, is, as a work of reference, necessarily dependent, for its value, upon the fulness and precision of its index. If deficient, in this important particular, it may be compared to a complicated lock, which the proprietor must consume his time, in the laborious process of picking, for the want of a well adapted key. The index, extending over two pages and a half only, is quite insufficient for a work of this nature.

Dr. Snow brought down his labors well nigh to the period of their publication, embracing what he is pleased to call his sixth epoch; and his work is the only existing history of Boston, from the earliest period, to the year 1825. It is embellished with a small map of Boston and its environs—a plan of Boston, in 1722, imperfectly copied, and with variations, from John Bonners; and another, of Boston, in 1824—a very interesting South East view of Boston, by Kidder—a view of Johnson Hall, Court Square—Nahant Hotel, as it was—the Leverett street Almshouse—a South view of the several halls of Harvard College—the triangular warehouse—the old Franklin house, in Milk street—the Julien House—the N. E. view of Faneuil Hall—Liberty Tree and the house in rear—the old State House and State street—a view of Charlestown—the new State House—the Exchange Coffee House, built in 1805, and burnt in 1818—the Boston Theatre, in Federal street—the Insane Hospital—the Mass General Hospital—the U. S. Branch Bank—the houses of Industry and Correction—the Last view of Faneuil Hall Market. These engravings are well executed, and add much to the interest of this volume, which claims to prolong the history of Boston, for eight and fifty years, after that period, at which the labors of Mr. Samuel G. Drake were suspended, that is from 1770 to 1828.

SIGMA.

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE HISTORIES OF BOSTON. No. III. Next, in the order of time, are the labors of Mr. Samuel G. Drake, which, though not more than half completed, have already assumed the form of a royal octavo volume of 840 pages. The scope and design of Mr. Drake may, in some measure, be gathered, from the title of his work—“*The History and Antiquities of Boston, the Capital of Massachusetts, and Metropolis of New England, from its settlement in 1630 to the year 1770. Also an Introductory History of the discovery and settlement of New England, with notes critical and illustrative.*” The aggregate work bears the date of 1856; though appearing originally in numbers, the first of which was published in September, 1852. Mr. Drake, having been requested, by the proprietor of that work, to prepare a new edition of the History of Boston, by Dr. Snow, decided, after reflection, upon the present work, instead.

Most of the numbers, eighteen in all, were received, and read, as they appeared; and, within the last two months, we have taken the entire

volume in hand, more deliberately. To the original numbers the author has added an appendix of thirty-four pages, and an index, altogether the most perfect thing of the kind we have ever met with, for a work of similar extent, covering sixty columns on twenty royal octavo pages. The value of an index in a work of this nature, in which the facts and incidents, and the names of men, things, and places cannot more easily be numbered, than the hairs of the head, is incalculable. Whoever, with a jaded horse, upon a tiresome journey, has felt the want of a guide board, to indicate the path he should take of several, that lie before him, may form some idea of the trials and vexations of a weary, literary traveller, for the want of an ample and accurate index. Until the recent publication of an index to the first fifty volumes of Blackwood's Magazine, the recovery of some vaguely recollected article there has made it often necessary, to examine the particular indexes of many separate volumes. Let us here thank the Lord, for putting into the heart of our valued friend, Mr.

William Frederick Poole, to prepare his valuable "Index to Periodical Literature."

It is very natural for one, reading merely for amusement, to skim the pages of this account of the history and antiquities of Boston, without even a suspicion of the time and toil devoted to its preparation. But no individual, who has had any experience, however limited, in the matter of antiquarian research, can give to these labors of Mr. Drake a candid examination, without promptly according to the author ample praise, for his untiring and successful industry. He has gathered together, and embodied in this volume, a prodigious amount of curious and interesting matter, bearing, more or less directly, upon the history and antiquities of Boston, and upon the discovery and settlement of New England.

Objections have been made to the size of this book. Certainly, it is not a pocket volume; and, to complete the work, another royal octavo, of some 800 pages, will probably be considered indispensable. Mr. Drake says, in his preface:

"The author has been earnestly urged, by numerous friends, to continue his work to the present time, and his inclination is to do so; but, as yet, no definite arrangement has been made, for that purpose. It may be said to be in the hands of the public. An immense outlay has been made to produce the present volume, for which no adequate return has yet been realized. To bring the history down to near the present time, another volume, of the same size as the present, would be required, the materials for which are abundant."

Assuming the price of the second volume to be the same as the price of the first, in numbers, the cost of the whole work would be some nine or ten dollars: and it remains to be seen, if there be enough of local pride, or interest in whatever relates to the place of our birth, or the home of our adoption, or of the genial spirit of patronage, or of a relish for historic and antiquarian treasures, to encourage the author of this work to pursue these meritorious, and eminently interesting, labors, to the end. Of one thing we are sufficiently assured, that, under existing circumstances, no man is better qualified for the completion of the task;—his hand is in; and the facilities and appliances are all around him, not only, in his own extensive library, particularly adapted to the work, but in a familiar acquaintance, the result of long, practical experience, with the avenues and sources of information. We are not less assured of one other thing—that, having officially resolved to present a copy of the *history* of our cis-atlantic Boston, to the city of Boston, beyond the sea, we can scarcely be always satisfied, in our consciences, by sending our friends *one half of it*—nor unless, within a reasonable period, we forward the remainder.

The objections to the size of this work appear to us unreasonable. We should be happy to travel some distance, in bad weather, to get a glimpse of so great a curiosity, as a book, that satisfied everybody, even in the length of it. It will certainly be found too long or too short, for, somebody. The perusal of compendiums, abridgments, abstracts, and epitomes, has ever appeared to us to resemble the process of travelling in tight boots. The work before us is emphatically a treasure-house of facts and incidents, and any one of those facts and incidents—any event, or circumstance, connected with the history of Boston, or the early settlement of New England, may be found in this receptacle—not by the laborious process of rumaging, among the countless materials there; but by the aid of the admirable index, to which we have referred. And, as the foot notes are very numerous, and the writer has cited his authorities, abundantly and carefully, the reader, who is desirous of making a more particular inquiry, can do so, readily.

A work of smaller compass, however it might satisfy some persons, would prove extremely unsatisfactory to others. It is a conceivably thing, that a pleasant writer—Daniel De Foë could have done it delightfully—might embody all the funny incidents, that have occurred, on this peninsula, and its environs, not forgetting Noad's Island and Winesent's, since 1630, and, with a judicious sprinkling of dates, knitting the whole together, by a suitable amount of sage observations, carefully distributed, and publish the aggregate, as a *History of Boston in New England*, at very small cost; and that persons might readily be found, who would greatly prefer such a work to these labors of Mr. Drake. Nothing follows from this assumption, however, but that, in every community, there are people whose taste is frivolous and depraved; and whose intellectual stomachs have become dyspeptical, by surfeiting upon trash, until they can no longer tolerate a more substantial aliment.

It has been suggested, that, if Mr. Drake had commenced his work with the arrival of Isaac Johnson, on the peninsula, Sept. 7, O. S., 1630, his work would have been shorter, by some one hundred pages. This is certainly true; but, though brevity is the soul of *wit*, it is neither the soul, nor the body, of *history*. We are not aware, that any historian has ever doubted the propriety of dealing, to some extent, in such preliminary matter, as seemed to constitute legitimate inducement to the main subject of the history. Whether or not, while writing of original sin, it be necessary to commence with the fall of Adam, a knowledge of these causes, which led our ancestors to leave the home of their fathers,

and cross the ocean, in search of a strange land, that knew not Joseph nor his kindred, cannot fail to be as interesting to their descendants, as any of those incidents, which befell them there, at any subsequent period of their pilgrimage. When the work was in course of publication, and we could form no accurate idea of its entire scope, we had some misgivings, as to the propriety of all this precursive matter, about Cabot, and Cortreal, and Aubert, and Verazzain, and

Cartier, and Frobisher, and Drake, and Raleigh, and Gilbert, and Hakluyt, and Gosnold, and Pring, and Weymouth, and Smith: and, even now, that we see far less disproportion, between this preliminary matter and the entire mass, we doubt not, that this preparatory part might have been considerably abbreviated, without any ill effect upon the main body. We have more to say, in relation to these historical labors of Mr. Drake. SIGMA.

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE HISTORIES OF BOSTON. No. IV. It is said, that there are errors in Mr. Drake's History of Boston. It would certainly be very wonderful, if the first edition of such a work as this, comprising 840 pages, should be free from errors. It is the work of man—not of inspiration. No person, probably, is more sensible of the fact, that there are errors in the work, than the author himself. There is a passage in the preface, admirably calculated to disarm all hostile criticism:

"As it respects the commission of errors, the author would expressly state, that he is well aware, that many exist in his work; and, that, however many others may detect, he feels quite sure, that none can discover as many as himself. But at the same time, he believes his work to be quite as free from them, as any other historical work, of the same magnitude."

In this opinion, we believe he will be found to be correct; and that his work is quite as free from mistakes, as the average of historical works of equal extent. We even think it will be difficult to find a first edition of any volume of 840 pages, abounding, like the present, in names and dates, so free from inaccuracies. We differ from Mr. Drake, in some particulars; but are quite ready to say, with Horace—

—ubi plura nitent—non ego paucis
Offendar maculis.

We all have an interest in rendering the history of Boston as accurate as possible. We cannot do a more gracious act, in this connection, than by noting any supposed inaccuracies, as we read, and placing our memoranda in the author's hands. We feel confident, that he will be grateful for such attentions; and that, whenever he becomes satisfied that an error exists, he will correct it, in a second edition, or by a table of *corrigenda*, appended to the second volume, of which, we trust, ere long, to witness the commencement.

The mass of curious and interesting matter, contained in the present volume, is very great, as

may be readily perceived, by any one, who will turn over its pages, even without a deliberate perusal: and, if there is any portion of the whole, which is not directly, or remotely, relevant to the subject matter, that portion is inconsiderable, and, in no case, devoid of interest.

The style of this work is easy, and unaffected. It is written, chiefly, after the diarial model, and with the year at the top of every page. For a work of this description, this method has ever seemed to us preferable to all others. The aspect of the volume is very acceptable; the paper is very good; and the type beautifully clear, and refreshing, to an old man's eyes. There are in this volume 39 engraved portraits of distinguished men and women—Samuel Adams, Belcher, Bradstreet, Burnett, Colman, Cooper, Cotton, Dudley, Gage, Hancock, Hutchinson, Mather, Mayhew, James Otis, King Philip, Prince, Shirley, Vane, John Winthrop, and others. There are also 134 autographs of eminent persons; and 125 engravings, large and small. Prefixed to the volume, are two folding maps of Boston and its environs, engraved expressly for the work. Against page 655 is an interesting view of Boston, from the sketch taken by Gov. Pownall from Castle William. The practice, adopted by the writer, of frequently employing the very words of his authorities, is greatly to be commended, and enables the reader to go along with him, confidently.

The history of a town may be supposed to be well and sufficiently written, when the writer has faithfully exhibited its origin and progress—its situation and boundaries—the number and names of its streets and public buildings—its population, trade, and manufactures—its municipal rule, and the more important events, which have occurred within its borders—some account of its religious sects and the principal inhabitants. Whoever supposes, that Mr. Drake has confined himself within these limits, will find himself, if tinctured with the spirit of a *fid. lang.*

syne, agreeably surprised, by the store of materials, which have been gathered together, relating to the bygone days of our metropolis. This is not only a work, to be marked, learned, and inwardly digested, by adults; but, abounding, as it does, in interesting narratives, it is not easy to imagine a more suitable new year's gift, for a Boston boy, who has fairly passed the era of tops and marbles.

In his preface, Mr. Drake refers, with a slight tincture of bitterness, to the opposition he has encountered. Wholly unacquainted with the provocation, we cannot decide upon the justice of his remarks. He says:

"As unthankful and unprofitable, as the task of a local historian is, he cannot always escape the envy of sordid and narrow minds. Even John Stow, the famous chronicler of England, had his envious traducers; but it is pleasant to reflect, that, while their names are quite forgotten, that of Stow is becoming more and more renowned, and resplendent. Those, who monopolize all knowledge, seldom excel in any of its departments, though they may shine for a time with the borrowed lustre of others. * * * * * The author of the History and Antiquities of Boston hopes to fare no worse than did his ancient brother, the Chronicler of London, who had the privilege of dying in poverty, notwithstanding 'James by the grace of God' gave him high sounding 'Letters patent,' allowing him, 'then on the verge of his 80th year,' to sell as many of his books as he could!"

On the whole, we should not have been displeased, had this passage been omitted. There are some things, which it does the flesh good to utter, but of which it cannot be said—*hæc olim meminisse juvabit*. We, probably, understand Mr. Drake, but some others may not; and this claim of fraternity with John Stow may be thought to savor of vanity. In his peculiar province, Stow was a very great man. It is remarkable, withal, that Stow and Speed, who occupied the first rank, as antiquaries, were both, originally, working tailors. Strype says, that Stow was 47 years collecting materials for the English History of which, at the time of his death, in 1603, being 80 years old, he meditated the publication. His first great work was the Summary of the Chronicles of England, which was re-printed, in black letter, in 1573. In 1600, he published his Annals,

from the time of the ancient Britons. His Survey of London had already appeared, in quarto, in 1598. A second edition, considerably enlarged, appeared in 1603. After his death, a third edition appeared, in 1618, published by Anthony Munday, who professed to have spent twelve years, in its revision and enlargement. A fourth edition appeared, in folio, in 1633. A fifth was published, under the supervision of John Strype, in 1720, and a sixth, with continuations, in 1754. This last edition was in two volumes, folio, each containing about 800 pages.

John Stow was reduced, in his old age, to beggary. Contributions were made for his relief; and Chalmers says: "We may judge of the sum total collected, by what was gathered from the parishioners of St. Mary Wolnoth, which amounted to no more than seven shillings and six pence."

If such is the standard of value, for an antiquary's services, well may Mr. Drake proclaim the task of a local historian to be "unthankful and unprofitable." Seven shillings and sixpence! May the magnificence of the parishioners of St. Mary Wolnoth go down to posterity, with the name of this poor old man, the time honored chronicler of London!

How many of us squander daily, upon senseless, and even vicious, indulgences, far more than the cost of "The History and Antiquities of Boston." Without encouragement, it is certain this valuable work must forever remain, as it is, a half completed history. And, when those, whose municipal name we bear, and to whom we have officially presented this moiety, interested as we know they will be, by its perusal—when they expect the remainder, as they reasonably may; we can only confess—there is not enough of interest among us, in the history and antiquities of our city, to encourage the author to finish the work—though God knows few people lavish more money, for the shortlived gratification of their eyes and ears—or in adorning their dwellings—or in exhibiting their wives and daughters, in monstrous envelopments of silks and satins, till they become, in homely, but significant, phraseology—"sights to be seen."

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